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Agenda item 116

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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1. At its 17th plenary meeting, on 20 September 2005, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixtieth session the item entitled "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) for the sole purpose of considering and taking action on its tentative programme of work for the next session.

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 19th and 20th meetings, on 28 October and 1 November 2005 (see A/C.4/60/SR.19 and 20).

3. At the 20th meeting, on 1 November, the President of the General Assembly addressed the Committee on this item at the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee (see A/C.4/60/SR.20).

4. At the same meeting, the Chairman drew the attention of the Committee to a document entitled "Draft provisional guidelines: approximate dates for the consideration of items by the Fourth Committee at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly" (A/C.4/60/WP.1), and a document entitled "Revitalization of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)" (A/C.4/60/WP.2).

5. Also at its 20th meeting, the Committee decided to annex the two documents to the report of the Committee (see annexes I and II).

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Annex I

Draft provisional guidelines: approximate dates for the consideration of items by the Fourth Committee at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly

Agenda items	*Dates for consideration*
Organization of work	28 September — a.m. (1 meeting)
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples	2 October — p.m. 3 October — p.m. 4 October — p.m. 5 October — p.m. 6 October — p.m. (5 meetings)
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations	
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories	
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	
Questions relating to information (interactive dialogue with the Secretariat followed by a general debate)	11 October — a.m. 12 October — a.m. 13 October — a.m. (3 meetings)
International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (interactive presentation by the Secretariat on its work followed by a general debate)	16 October — p.m. 17 October — p.m. 18 October — p.m. (3 meetings)
Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (interactive dialogue with the Secretariat in accordance with the issues listed in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations followed by a general debate)	19 October — p.m. 20 October — p.m. 23 October — a.m. 24 October — a.m. (4 meetings)
Effects of atomic radiation	25 October — a.m. 26 October — a.m. 27 October — a.m. (3 meetings)

Agenda items	*Dates for consideration*
University for Peace	
Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly	
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (question and answer period followed by a general debate)	30 October — p.m. 31 October — p.m. 1 November — p.m. (3 meetings)
Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories	2 November — p.m. 3 November — p.m. 6 November — p.m. (3 meetings)
Action on all draft resolutions submitted under the last two items above	7 November — p.m. (1 meeting)
Total	**26 meetings**

Annex II

Revitalization of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Non-paper submitted by the Chairman

(as approved by the Committee on 11 March 2005)

Introduction

1. Further to General Assembly resolutions 58/126 and 58/316, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) reviewed its practices and working methods during the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly.

2. The members of the Fourth Committee agree on the continuing relevance and importance of the work of their Committee. They further agree on the necessity of retaining and strengthening the political character of the work of the Fourth Committee. The specific proposals relating to changes in the working methods, agenda items and related resolutions should be seen in this light.

Working methods

3. The members agree that greater use should be made of interactive debates, panel discussions and "question time" with representatives of the Secretariat, United Nations experts and, in informal meetings, with other stakeholders. Specifically, the following changes in working methods have been proposed.

4. With regard to the item "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects", the interactive debate should be divided up to correspond to chapters of the reports of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. Special attention should be given to the subject of peacebuilding in the context of addressing post-conflict situations.

5. Concerning the item "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space", representatives of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should give an interactive presentation on its work at the beginning of the first meeting on this item, followed by a question and answer period.

6. The items "Questions relating to information" and "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" should also have question and answer periods.

Agenda items

7. In order to retain and strengthen the political character of the work of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, its members agree that the General Assembly should consider allocating items of such a nature to the Committee in order to allow for a more in-depth exchange of views and to benefit from the proposed interactive methods of work of the Fourth Committee, where appropriate.

8. The following items, among others, should be considered in this context:

"Prevention of armed conflict"

"Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa".

9. The members agree that the General Assembly could consider allocating to the Fourth Committee country-specific items of an internationally predominant political nature and of pertinence to the Committee, after consultations with the sponsors of resolutions pertaining to these items.

10. The members believe that the item "Assistance in mine action" does not fit well within the agenda of the Committee. They request the General Assembly to consider relocating the item from the agenda of the Fourth Committee to another forum.

11. Regarding the item "Effects of atomic radiation", the members agree that the General Assembly should consider relocating it to another forum. If the item stays on the agenda of the Fourth Committee, the resolution on this item should be biennialized, containing a provision which would allow the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation to continue to meet annually.

12. The members agree that the number of meetings on the item "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space" should be reduced from four to three.

13. The members note that considerable progress has been made over the past 10 years in streamlining the resolutions on the item "United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East" and note the importance of exploring the possibility of further streamlining. Concerning the item "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories", members agree in their hope for genuine progress in the Middle East which would facilitate the streamlining of resolutions under this agenda item by their sponsors.

14. Regarding the item "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", the members agree that the Fourth Committee should request the Special Committee to continue to examine possibilities for streamlining its work and to present concrete proposals for further consideration by the Fourth Committee.